

Tipping Points in the History of Academic Theatre and Performance Studies in South Africa

TEMPLE HAUPTFLEISCH

This article considers five tipping points or phases in the development of modern theatre studies in South Africa. It begins with the period from 1925 to 1935, a time when the first major theatre history appeared, a fully fledged (Western) theatre system was established and the African theatre tradition was recognized. It details 1945 to 1962 for the establishment of a coherent professional theatre system, the first state-funded theatre company and the first drama departments. Thereafter, 1970 to 1985 is identified as the most significant period in relation to the political struggle for liberation in South Africa, while the last two phases (1988–94 and 1997–9) under consideration are characterized by an increase in research output and by the need for practitioners and commentators to seek reconciliation and healing through theatre and performance.

The history of theatre in southern Africa is immensely old (the oldest known performances are the oral narratives and shamanistic dances among the San), but as there are no written records and precious few visual records from those early times, it really only becomes possible to discuss scholarly research from the time of European settlement and the earliest written records of theatrical performance and cultural life in the colonies.¹ Moreover, while ideas of theatre research and performance studies in South Africa – as we tend to define them today – are really creations of the twentieth century,² they also have substantial roots in sociocultural processes which date back to the mid-nineteenth century. Notable were the amateur and professional theatre and the advent of the professional critic (1880–1947), the rise of Afrikaner and African intellectualism and cultural nationalism (1880–1948) and the establishment of a Western education and university system (1829–1916),³ reinforced later by the introduction of drama and theatre studies at nine universities (1942–75).

These processes, while originating in some innovative work in the first half of the twentieth century, but actually only coming to fruition during the late 1970s, would pass through a number of significant phases, or tipping points (to use Malcolm Gradwell's terminology).⁴ These were periods when a critical mass of significant factors was present in society, sufficient to shift, alter, enhance, supplant or otherwise affect cultural and/or academic paradigms. Below I consider five such moments in the history of academic theatre and performance studies in South Africa.

Phase one, 1925–35: the literary legacy and the emergence of academic training in theatre

The years preceding 1925 had been dominated by the trauma of the Boer War, the founding of the Union and the devastating Great War. Moreover, the seeds were sown for a number of bitter short- and long-term problems, notably the issue of Afrikaner identity and nationality, and the complex matter of the rights of an ignored black majority.

The effect of these factors on theatre was wide-ranging, for in addition to the recognized traditions of amateur English, Dutch and Afrikaans theatre and a flourishing English urban theatre, there was a significant move to establish a professional Afrikaans theatre.⁵ The first two Afrikaans companies took to the road in 1925, leading to the emergence of a generation of accomplished playwrights and performers who, strongly influenced by the imported European theatre traditions, would set the tone and style of Afrikaans theatre for the next three decades or more. By 1935 there would be more than forty Afrikaans and English companies on the road, criss-crossing the country, playing rural towns as well as major cities.

It is in this context that two strains of theatre reviewing and criticism came to dominate arts journalism in the mid-century. On the one hand, there was the pragmatic, journalistic writing in English newspapers; on the other, there was the international, often more erudite, writing by better-educated cultural figures in Afrikaans newspapers and cultural journals. Unlike their English-speaking counterparts, who did not come from an intellectual tradition (few had tertiary education before the 1970s), a number of the Dutch (and later Afrikaans) critics were university-trained individuals who had gone to Holland and Germany to study philology, philosophy or literature. They tended to have a European view of theatre and the arts and adopted a far more intellectual approach to their craft. In addition, as part of the growing Afrikaans cultural movement, they desired not only to make art and to write about it, but to study and chronicle the development of the arts and thus create a cultural identity for the Afrikaner.

Three publications from this time figure as the harbingers of formal theatre research in South Africa. Firstly there was P. W. Laidler's 1926 anecdotal book *Annals of the Cape Stage*, neither an enormously detailed nor an erudite account of events, but nonetheless a very useful source of information, one that still serves for studies of English theatre in the Cape in the early 1900s.⁶ However, with some justification, F. C. L. Bosman's monumental 1928 history of drama and theatre in South Africa (1652–1855) can be called the first true piece of theatre research on South African theatre.⁷ The result of formidable historical detective work based on a reading of all the available documents in the state archives and the state libraries of the country, it describes the history of South Africa's colonial theatre (in Dutch, French, German, English and Afrikaans) from the arrival of the Dutch in 1652 to the mid-point of British colonial rule in 1855. Besides the books themselves, Bosman's primary legacy is his pioneering of the idea that theatre was a *performed* art form, rather than a *literary* form – an important legacy for his students and for those researchers influenced by his work.⁸

Valuable as this work was and is for understanding colonial theatre in the region at the time, it paid hardly any attention to African performance and its contribution

to the history of theatre and to dramatic theory. It was left to a third writer, H. I. E. (Herbert) Dhlomo, to initiate this process. Founder, with his brother Rolf, of the Bantu Dramatic Society in Johannesburg in 1933, he had a clear vision for the cultural development of the black South African. Among his works is a series of remarkable articles which he published in the 1930s and 1940s, exploring the nature and purpose of drama in (southern) Africa. His philosophy of theatre sought to blend European notions of theatre with an understanding of African performance practice – this long before the advent of performance theory. Dhlomo's ideas were not widely appreciated at the time of their publication, but are highly significant for the ways in which they constitute one of the first original attempts to devise a home-grown dramatic theory for South Africa.⁹

Phase two, 1945–62: preparing the groundwork

Until the mid-1970s, much of the research that followed on Bosman's epic project remained focused on generalized literary histories and overviews, with the notion of drama as performed art initially receiving scant attention and local writing in English or the African languages not considered an important field of study. However, by 1945 professional theatre had developed into a much stronger and more diverse industry. By then it was a cohesive polysystem, consisting of a strong amateur base (among all language and population groups), a largely itinerant rural Afrikaans theatre, a repertory English system in the cities, and emerging urban and rural patterns of music and dance performances among the black population. In 1947 the National Theatre Organisation (NTO), the first state-supported theatre company in the British Commonwealth, came into being (theoretically) to provide theatre for the whole country, though in reality limited to white Afrikaans and English touring companies. In 1961 this initiative expanded to become four well-funded provincial Performing Arts Councils, responsible for theatre, music, dance and opera in the four provinces.¹⁰ Their repertoires were largely European, English and American, with a smattering of original Afrikaans work, and the occasional English play by a local writer. At the same time, toward the latter part of the period, we see the first stirrings of more politicized work. For example, between 1956 and 1962 Athol Fugard made his appearance, the musical *King Kong* introduced a new kind of urban performance and a number of Afrikaans and English writers produced controversial work which changed the nature of local writing.¹¹ This outcrop of performances was accompanied by a growth in published commentaries and reviews, most newspapers now having substantial arts pages and regular theatre reviewers, some of whom (notably the Afrikaans critics) were not only academically knowledgeable but also internationally theatre-aware.¹²

Most importantly, this was the period when formal training in what came to be known as 'theatre studies' began. Before 1935 some universities (Cape Town, Durban and Stellenbosch) offered courses in voice and elocution, but the first formal departments were only established at the University of Cape Town's School of Speech and Drama (in 1942), the University of Natal in Durban's Department of Speech and Drama (in 1949) and the University of Stellenbosch (in 1953).¹³ The structural models adopted were

not the British or European, with their split between academic study at universities and practical training in conservatoires, but something much more integrated, more akin to the North American model, as a blend of practical training and academic study. It is basically the same system that obtains today.

A distinctive difference developed between the English drama departments and the Afrikaans departments. English departments tended to opt for *drama training*, with a focus on inculcating practical performance skills, and were less concerned with academic work and postgraduate research. These departments were often led by speech practitioners and actors, including Rosalie van der Gucht, Elizabeth Sneddon and Robert Mohr. Although initially also geared towards skills training, Afrikaans departments gradually came to favour a *theatre studies* approach, with a strong interest in the role of the text-focused critic, researcher and historian. These departments were largely founded and led (or partially led) by academics or journalists rather than practitioners, who came from the Dutch/Belgian/German world of formal drama study (such as Geoff Cronje, F. C. L. Bosman, Fred Engelen and Fred le Roux). The impact of this groundwork phase of experiment and academic development is evidenced in the gradual increase in the formal publishing of theatre research, with substantial monographs appearing in the seven years under discussion. Besides a surprising number of overviews, histories and biographical studies by journalists,¹⁴ the period saw the completion of three postgraduate theses – one on Afrikaans and the other two on English playwriting in South Africa.¹⁵ These were largely summaries and overviews of plays to date, with little or no theorizing, framing or serious critique. At this stage, the most important point is that while there was no clearly structured theatre research community as yet (nor even a clear imperative to undertake research), the focus of cultural studies and literary research generally had clearly begun a slow but perceptible shift towards a much stronger interest in the performance aspects of local theatre and in local topics for research.

Phase three, 1970–85: cultural struggle, radical theatre and the emergence of theatre studies

The 1970s and 1980s were two of the most productive decades in more than three hundred years of cultural activity, with the most exciting, diverse and politically relevant performances and events taking place. In addition, both the context and the theatrical events of the period are perhaps more comprehensively documented than those of any other era, for it was the time of the political struggle for liberation in South Africa and there was a real sense of purpose to everything, including a deep commitment to and engagement with the work by artists, commentators and audiences.¹⁶ In what became known as the cultural struggle, this commitment would profoundly influence the next two generations of artists and affect the way in which the arts were perceived.¹⁷

A core value of this arts movement was a belief in the potential of art as a political weapon and its ability to change society and influence the political and social future. Besides the large-scale, opulent – often brilliant – work done by the Performing Arts Councils, and the box-office successes of major professional companies, a range of important movements and facilities in alternative theatre emerged in this period. These

included the formally structured 'poor' theatre spaces (The Space Theatre, the Market Theatre and so on), radical companies (Theatre Workshop '71, Junction Avenue Theatre, the Serpent Players, Glasteater/Glass Theatre, Bahumutsi Drama Group and so on), the informal (often unknown) township venues (where underground performances by performance poets, actor-playwrights and other artists took place), and the many municipal and school halls where the touring township musicals of Gibson Kente and others were presented. The National Arts Festival (popularly known as the Grahamstown Festival) was also founded in 1973, in response to an important drive for identity and recognition among the various cultural groups in the country. The festival rapidly came to have a powerful, long-term effect on theatre in general and the development of a theatre system specifically.

These two decades of political struggle are also synonymous with the emergence of what is today generally referred to as 'applied theatre'. By the late 1970s the idea of utilizing theatre processes in order to try to heal, change, educate, inform and otherwise empower people, and thus perhaps also to change society, had become an important element in the practice of many theatre-makers and cultural activists, and would continue to grow in importance. Applied techniques and practices included workshopped political theatre (deriving from Brecht, Boal and others), drama in education (DIE) and theatre in education (TIE). Later, the practice would be expanded to include the theories and methodologies of fields such as psychodrama, drama therapy, socio-drama, theatre for development and community theatre, and even the more commercial fields of what is known as 'live advertising' and industrial theatre. In the 1980s, these practices would become a core part of university training programmes, academic and professional conferences and theatre research.

Six more drama departments were now founded to fill the need created by the growth of professional theatre, radio and the eagerly awaited television service (1976). These departments, their faculty and especially their students, were important as theatre became a weapon in the struggle for liberation, and all contributed to practical experimentation and intellectual debate. Not only were they instrumental in making protest theatre, but they also produced the theorists for and documenters of the cultural struggle.

Significantly the developments described above had come precisely at a time when the state, through its Department of Education (DOE), actively began to promote research and postgraduate study, requiring universities to up their 'research output', in line with an international 'publish or perish' philosophy. In support of this aim, the department introduced a number of interesting incentives over the years, several of which were important to the arts. For example, in 1968 the DOE founded a semi-autonomous research institution called the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), which in 1971 acquired an Institute for Arts, Language and Literature, with a subsection called the Documentation Centre for the Performing Arts. Founded by P. P. B. Breytenbach (1971–3) and Rinie Stead (1973–8), it initially collected archival materials and published bibliographies. Restructured as the Centre for South African Theatre Research (CESAT) in 1979 and headed by Temple Hauptfleisch (1979–87), it proceeded to undertake active research, its projects being largely statistical, methodological and sociological studies of audience attendance (1979–81), interest in the arts in South Africa (1983) and theatre

history. CESAT closed down in 1988 and its materials were transferred to the State Archives in Pretoria.¹⁸

In this period the DOE introduced a unique rewards system for research outputs as part of its tertiary funding formula. To encourage publication, this scheme was designed to reward institutions with a substantial and specified amount per research output unit produced by academic staff. Since many institutions passed (part of) the money on to the particular department or individual researcher, these financial incentives encouraged more research publication, particularly once academics overcame the fear that the system would be used to censor and control their work. In turn, the system had a stimulating effect on publishers and editors.

In this favourable environment a number of associations and institutions emerged, seeking to organize and to promote theatre and theatre-related research and practice.¹⁹ Their conferences and seminars generated a number of research initiatives, including a stronger interest in publication. However, while most of the South African academic literary journals of the time would take articles on drama, the articles published tended to be largely literary in format and focus. In response, a number of attempts were thus made by theatre researchers to found more performance-oriented journals. In the years under discussion, four such journals are of particular interest. *S'Ketsh* (published sporadically between 1973 and 1979) proved an outstanding and valuable resource on township theatre, alternative theatre and theatre by black writers, directors and performers. Three other important journals were *Teaterforum* (1979–86, founded by Elize Scheepers of the Drama Department at the University of Potchefstroom for CHE), which supplied a forum for lecturers in drama departments; the *SAADYT Journal* (founded in 1979 by the South African Association for Drama and Youth Theatre), which focused on the theory and practice of educational theatre forms; and *Critical Arts* (founded in 1980 by Keyan Tomaselli and John van Zyl at the University of the Witwatersrand), which dealt more widely with media and cultural issues, but also published some trenchant work on theatre and performance.

By the early 1970s, although there was an academic infrastructure for theatre study, most theatre research was still located in literature departments and, with a few important exceptions – such as the writing of the prolific and inspiring Stephen Gray²⁰ – tended to be conservative in approach, concentrating on biographical studies of playwrights and the analysis of published texts, rather than studies of performers, performances and the theatre and performance system.²¹ However, by the 1980s a number of new theses and book-length publications were radically changing the direction and focus of research in the country. For example, a 1981 volume edited by Robert Kavanagh made a profound impression on theatre studies and the teaching of theatre in the country with its introduction of non-traditional work from the arena of protest theatre and popular theatre.²² A similar shift came in 1984 when Hauptfleisch and Steadman's collection of four plays appeared,²³ the first publication since Bosman's pioneering work to seek to discuss a more representative range of local playwriting and production traditions.²⁴

However, the most notable year was arguably 1985, when four important doctoral projects, dealing specifically with black South African performance, were completed by Peter Larlham, David Coplan, Robert Kavanagh and Ian Steadman.²⁵ Larlham introduced

the study of rural indigenous performance forms, while Coplan, Kavanagh and Steadman discussed black urban performance, introducing a strong cultural-materialist approach which was to influence such studies for much of the 1980s and into the 1990s.²⁶

One consequence of the eruption of theatre research energies around this time was an increased interest in interdisciplinary research – more specifically in the work of cultural anthropologists and what VeVe Clark termed ‘theatre archaeologists’, as theatre researchers began to look for more specific links with the precolonial past.²⁷ A critical factor for those twentieth-century theatre researchers who chose to study these precolonial and preliterate cultures is that in any preliterate performance one is dealing with a set of oral, visual and kinetic activities, taking place in a world where no orthography or any (extant) tradition of written history existed. It is specifically in this period and the phase to be discussed below that we see major advances being made in interpreting and using the findings of the new cultural archaeology and anthropological research, and adapting them for use in theatre and performance studies.²⁸

Phase four, 1988–94: revisiting the past, coping with the future, rethinking the paradigms

This phase coincided with the democratization process and was an extremely volatile and interesting one, during which the future of theatre and the shape and role of the theatre industry were heavily debated in a diverse number of forums and publications. It was also a time of some self-doubt and uncertainty among artists, writers and academics, since much of the *raison d'être* for the preceding period had been the liberation struggle – without the struggle, what would one write about or build performances on? Yet, interestingly enough, this very uncertainty stimulated publication and research in a number of ways. Building on the research infrastructure, and the theoretical and methodological advances of the 1980s, the years after 1988 saw another burst of activity. This was marked by the founding of the South African Association for Theatre Research, a significant increase in the number of undergraduate and postgraduate drama students, and a conscious attempt by academics and artists to return to international participation after the ending of the cultural boycott.

The 1980s trend towards founding research facilities (centres and institutes) at various universities continued, with the Centre for Theatre and Performance Studies (CENTAPS) at the University of Stellenbosch (1994–2009) perhaps being the most specifically focused on theatre and performance.²⁹ This clearing house and information centre engaged in a number of research programmes on the theory, history and function of theatre in South Africa, as well as publishing the *South African Theatre Journal* (SATJ).³⁰

Like the years from 1984 to 1985, this short phase (1988–94) produced a significant increase in doctoral studies,³¹ a large number of important articles and at least sixteen substantial book publications, from traditional histories to more radical and innovative studies of alternative performance forms in the country, notably oral performance and dance. Some of the most important contributions came from Martin Orkin, J. C. Kannemeyer, Astrid von Kotze and Liz Gunner, all of them managing to extend the range of the field of study in some way or another.³²

Phase five, 1997–9: theatre and performance beyond the page

The final period comes just at the point when the country's old theatre system, which had been under intense scrutiny and threat at the start of the 1990s, was dismantled, with much of its energy shifting to the vibrant and widespread, post-1994 festival circuit and to the new generation of small, non-conventional urban performance venues.³³ On the other hand, the academic system was now well entrenched and open (if not yet financially accessible) to all citizens, and most importantly the area of theatre and performance studies was a recognized field of postgraduate research appropriately funded by the state.

This secure status is well illustrated by the three years preceding the new millennium, when more than sixty masters and doctoral studies were completed and twelve substantial books appeared.³⁴ Arguably the most influential of these were Loren Kruger's *The Drama of South Africa: Plays, Pageants and Publics since 1910*, one of the best overviews of the history of theatre and performance in the country since Bosman's 1928 publication, and Duncan Brown's *Oral Literature & Performance in Southern Africa*, a significant contribution to the knowledge of indigenous oral performance.³⁵ These attempts to reinterpret and expand ideas about performance in the region were well supported by other new publications from the same period, by, among others, Bernth Lindfors, Lizbeth Goodman, Martin Orkin, Kathy Perkins, David Graver, Rolf Solberg and Temple Hauptfleisch.³⁶ A key element of this new phase is the recognition by these researchers, as well as artists, of the central role that non-verbal forms (such as physical theatre) and intercultural performance (or what I have referred to as 'crossover performance'³⁷) have come to play in South Africa.

However, what now becomes an issue of some concern – or at least of some intellectual interest – is the fact that, unlike the previous periods discussed, the majority of the academic work published is the work of academics attached to foreign institutions, not local researchers – despite the incentives in place. In part this has to do with the nature of the state's incentive system, which favours the publication of articles in academic journals rather than books, but it also has something to do with a growing dissatisfaction among departments in faculties of arts at tertiary institutions regarding the role of the artist–lecturer and the research element in creative work. Specifically, the point is that the reward system has never recognized creative output as the equivalent of formal articles or books, and to this day adamantly refuses to do so. Two strong and compelling arguments have always been made for their exclusion: (1) the process of making art is an autonomous activity with its own unique infrastructures and funding and reward systems, and (2) it is difficult to obtain peer reviews of outputs which fall into the category of what has come to be called 'practice as research' (PAR),³⁸ namely outputs where the processes of making theatre constitute both the methodology of research and the outcome or report on the research.

In view of this dismissive attitude, the issue of PAR became an important focus of academic debate in the 1990s – along with the efforts made by various institutions to establish practice-based doctoral programmes in South Africa, something the government is strenuously resisting. The reasoning behind this drive to accredit PAR processes derives not only from what I perceive to be a growing international interest

in this regard,³⁹ but also from two local factors: namely the increasing importance of applied theatre practices and a marked growth in experimental, multidisciplinary and multicultural work by performing companies to explore identity and the processes of understanding and healing, as well as recovering the past.⁴⁰ Such processes not only constitute areas of practical research endeavour, but are also keenly studied by a number of researchers, including Yvette Hutchison, Mark Fleishman, Nadia Davids, Juanita Finestone, Liz Mills and Alex Sutherland.

Since the year 2000 numerous and sometimes radical changes have been made to the tertiary education system in South Africa and the campaign to improve research output has intensified. Further incentives were introduced, most controversially a rating system for researchers based on their output and reputation. The response of the research community was diverse but intense, and included more fiery debates about the PAR issue. Part of this process led to a state-sponsored pilot research project by Mark Fleishman and representatives from a number of drama departments, seeking ways to set up a peer-review system for creative research output.⁴¹

In addition, these interests have led to a series of groundbreaking conferences over the past ten years, including three Dramatic Learning Spaces conferences organized by Veronica Baxter at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg; the 2007 IFTR Annual Conference held at the University of Stellenbosch; an Applied Theatre conference organized by Warren Nebe at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2009, and an IFTR-sponsored seminar on academic writing hosted by the University of Stellenbosch for African scholars, 2010. The first three of these meetings were dominated by the PAR debate.

From this overview it is apparent that the academic discourse on drama, theatre and performance, with its drive to recognize and incorporate an understanding of theatre as a performed art into formal theatre studies in South Africa, has in many ways been an ongoing attempt to recognize and understand the roots of theatre and performance in the region. By way of a number of key tipping points, I believe we have now arrived at a juncture where notions of performance and notions of research are truly beginning to intersect and our understanding of the nature of African performance (including contemporary performance) is being expanded through our capacity not only to make intercultural, crossover theatre, but also, more significantly for this argument, to better comprehend and appreciate such work in performance.

NOTES

- 1 Which does not mean that extensive archaeological and cultural-historical research has not been done to enable us to 'read' and understand the records left by precolonial peoples. See note 28 below.
- 2 I use the term 'theatre research' in the way it is broadly used by the IFTR and *TRI*, despite the fact that this European-American view is clearly open to challenge and contestation by writers and thinkers from other parts of the globe. See, for example, most recently Linda Tuhiwai Smith's thought-provoking book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books and University of Otago Press, 1999); and Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
- 3 The first was the University of Cape Town (1829).

- 4 See Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York: Little Brown, 2000). Also interesting is Philip Ball, *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another* (London: Arrow Books, 2004).
- 5 Driven by the Afrikaner nationalist movement and the arrival in South Africa of a number of qualified Dutch and Flemish performers, such as revered actor–manager Paul de Groot, who brought professionalism and literary acumen to his productions. They provided much needed in-service training in Afrikaans to a host of performers.
- 6 P. W. Laidler, *Annals of the Cape Stage* (Edinburgh: William Bryce, 1926).
- 7 F. C. L. Bosman, *Drama en Toneel in Suid-Afrika Deel I 1652–1855* (Pretoria: J. H. de Bussy, 1928). Bosman also published short summaries of the history in English and in Afrikaans, as well as a second volume, F. C. L. Bosman, *Drama en Toneel in Suid-Afrika Deel II 1855–1916* (Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik, 1980).
- 8 See, for example, Ludwig Binge, *Ontwikkeling van die Afrikaanse Toneel 1832 tot 1950* (The Development of the Afrikaans Theatre, 1832 to 1950) (Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik, 1969); and Jill Fletcher, *The Story of the African Theatre 1780–1930* (Cape Town: Vlaeberg, 1994). The Internet-based encyclopedia of South African theatre (ENSAT) currently being compiled by Stellenbosch University's Drama Department is also largely indebted to Bosman for its data on early theatre.
- 9 More immediately successful were his attempts to stimulate an interest in theatre among the youth in urban settlements, leading to the gradual growth of many other amateur theatre and performance groups in the various black townships around the cities. His articles and dramatic works were rediscovered and published in the 1970s and 1980s, becoming part of the theory of the new, alternative, South African theatre as articulated by the writers and theorists of the cultural struggle of the 1970s. See H. I. E. Dhlomo, *Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. by Nick Visser (special issue of *English in Africa*, 4, 2 (1977), pp. 1–76), *idem*, *Collected Works*, ed. by Nick Visser and Tim Couzens (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1985); and Tim Couzens, *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H. I. E. Dhlomo* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1985).
- 10 The Cape Performing Arts Board (CAPAB), the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT), the Performing Arts Council of the Orange Free State (PACOFOS) and the Natal Performing Arts Council (NAPAC).
- 11 One of the most influential periods of South African theatre was 1956–62, with new work produced including *The Cell* (1956), *No Good Friday* (1958), *Nongogo* (1959) and *The Bloodknot* (1961) by Athol Fugard; *Moeder Hanna* (1956) and *Die Verminktes* (performed as *The Maimed*, London 1960) by Bartho Smit; *Germanicus* (1957) by N. P. van Wyk Louw; *The Kimberley Train* (1958) by Lewis Sowden; *Try for White* (1959) by Basil Warner; and *King Kong* (1959) by Harry Bloom, Pat Williams and Todd Mitshikiza (1959).
- 12 A good case in point was W. E. G. Louw, one of the most prominent critics of the 1950s and 1960s and later an influential and powerful arts editor who not only had a doctorate, but claimed to have seen over a thousand European performances during his frequent visits to Europe.
- 13 The oldest form of training (beyond pure apprenticeship) in the country had always been in private drama and elocution classes, most of them affiliated later to the SA Guild of Speech Teachers (founded 1945).
- 14 Pioneering actor–director André Huguenet's rather self-aggrandizing autobiographical work *Applous! Die Kronieke van 'n Toneelspeler* (Applause! The Chronicles of an Actor) (Cape Town: HAUM, 1950) provides a thoughtful insider's view and acute analysis of the way theatre worked during the 1930s and 1940s. Other works discussed influential producers (Muriel Alexander, the Hanekom family, African Consolidated Theatres and the Stodel family), the *King Kong* production and children's theatre in Cape Town and Johannesburg.
- 15 L. W. B. Binge, *Ontwikkeling van die Afrikaanse Toneel*; L. D. M. Stopforth, 'Drama in South Africa', unpublished MA dissertation, University of Potchefstroom, 1955; B. De Koker, 'South African Playwriting in English 1900–1950: A Survey', unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Pretoria, 1969.

- 16 'The Struggle' or 'the Liberation Struggle' normally refers to the period from the Sharpeville shootings (1960) and the 1976 uprisings to the negotiations of 1989–90. This includes the 'armed struggle' and the 'cultural struggle'.
- 17 In its narrower, specific sense the term 'cultural struggle' refers to the period when culture and the arts were consciously used as weapons in the struggle against apartheid and the Nationalist regime (1963–90). The struggle did much to shape artistic and critical theories and practice in the period, producing and condoning a specific kind of political art, but – in the eyes of many – at the expense of artistic freedom and artistic standards.
- 18 Later part of the South African Centre for Information on the Arts (SACIA) in Pretoria. Also deriving from the HSRC documentation project in the 1970s were the Afrikaans Nasionale Letterekunde Museum en Dokumentasie Sentrum (NALN) (The National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Documentation Centre) and the National English Literary Museum (NELM) established in Grahamstown. Both centres are still invaluable sources for literary and theatrical materials.
- 19 Besides trade associations, there was the Centre for Cultural and Communications Studies Unit (later the Centre for Culture, Communication and Media Studies – CCMS) at the University of Natal, founded and run by Keyan Tomaselli and a number of academic associations, such as the Association of Drama Departments of South Africa (ADDSA) and the South African Association for Drama and Youth Theatre (SAADYT).
- 20 For example, Stephen Gray, *Southern African Literature: An Introduction* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1979); *idem*, ed., *Athol Fugard* (Johannesburg: McGraw Hill, 1982); and *idem*, ed., *Stephen Black: Three Plays* (Johannesburg: Ad Donker, 1982).
- 21 See Temple Hauptfleisch 'Theatre Research in South Africa', *Critical Arts*, 1, 3 (October 1980), pp. 11–22.
- 22 Robert Kavanagh, ed., *South African People's Plays* (London: Heinemann, 1981). This book was initially banned, but later unbanned for academic use.
- 23 Temple Hauptfleisch and Ian Steadman, eds., *South African Theatre: Four Plays and an Introduction* (Pretoria: HAUM Educational, 1984).
- 24 A further three publications on aspects of Afrikaans theatre were J. H. Senekal, ed., *Beeld en Bedryf* (Image and Act) (Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik, 1978); Charles Malan, ed., *Spel en Spieël. Besprekings van die Moderne Afrikaanse Drama en Teater* (Play and Mirror: Discussions of the Modern Afrikaans Drama and Theatre) (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1984); André P. Brink, *Aspekte van die Nuwe Drama* (Aspects of the New Drama) (Pretoria: Academica, 1986).
- 25 Peter Larlham, *Black Theater, Dance, and Ritual in South Africa* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985); David Coplan, *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press; London: Longman, 1985); Robert Kavanagh, *Theatre and Cultural Struggle in South Africa* (London: Zed Books, 1985); and Ian Steadman, 'Drama and Social Consciousness: Themes in Black Theatre on the Witwatersrand until 1985', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985.
- 26 Following this initial burst of activity, other individual researchers also made significant contributions (through research reports, theses, articles, lectures and books) to broaden the scope of theatre research beyond the narrow confines of written literature or formal theatre. More than forty more publications appeared in the period.
- 27 See VeVe Clark, 'The Archaeology of Black Theatre,' *Critical Arts*, 2, 1 (1981), pp. 34–50.
- 28 Notable in this regard have been the research and publications of J. D. Lewis Williams and his colleagues at the Rock Art Research Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand; the research on oral narrative and literature carried out by a wide range of scholars from 1975 to 1995, including Harold Scheub, Isabel Hofmeyr, R. H. Kaschula, Jeff Opland, Leroy Vail and Landeg White, M. I. P. Mokitimi, Duncan Brown, Liz Gunner and others; and the research on traditional dances among the Xhosa, Zulu, Venda and other indigenous peoples by Edith Katzenellenbogen and her students at the University of Stellenbosch in the 1980s.

- 29 Three other resources from the 1980s are the Centre for Cultural and Media Studies (CCMS) at the University of Natal in Durban, the Institute for the Study of English in Africa (ISEA) at Rhodes University and the Centre for the Study of African Language and Literature (CESALL) at the University of Durban Westville. The Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa at the University of the Western Cape was founded in the 1990s and in 2001 became part of the Robben Island Museum, its archives being called the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, but still housed in the Centre on the campus.
- 30 *SATJ* was originally founded in 1987 by Temple Hauptfleisch and Ian Steadman as the first academic theatre journal which complied with the demands of the state's publication reward system. *Shakespeare in South Africa*, edited by Laurence Wright for the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa and published by the Institute for the Study of English in Africa, began in 1988.
- 31 For example, Walter Greyvenstein, 'The History and Development of Children's Theatre in English in South Africa', unpublished D.Litt. et Phil. thesis, Johannesburg, Rand Afrikaans University, 1988; P. J. du Toit, *Amateurtoneel in Suid-Afrika* (Amateur Theatre in South Africa) (Pretoria: Academica, 1988); Julian Smith, *Toneel en Politiek: 'n Voorlopige dokumentering en ideologiese verrekening van kontemporêre swart Afrikaanse toneelaktiwiteit in die Kaapse Skiereiland* (Theatre and Politics: A Provisional Documentation and Ideological Exploration of Contemporary Black Theatre Activity in the Cape Peninsula) (Bellville, Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland, 1990); and Zakes Mda, *When People Play People: Development Communication through Theatre* (Johannesburg: Zed Books, Witwatersrand University Books, 1993).
- 32 Martin Orkin, *Drama and the South African State* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1991), J. C. Kannemeyer, *Die Afrikaanse Literatuur 1652–1987* (Afrikaans Literature 1652–1987) (Pretoria: Human en Rousseau, 1988); Astrid von Kotze, *Organise and Act: The Natal Workers' Theatre Movement 1983–1987* (Durban: Culture and Working Life Publications, 1988); and Liz Gunner, ed., *Politics and Performance: Theatre, Poetry and Song in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994).
- 33 See, for example, articles in Temple Hauptfleisch, Shulamith Lev-Aladgem, Jacqueline Martin, Willmar Sauter and Henri Schoenmakers, eds., *Festivalising! Theatrical Events, Politics and Culture* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007); and Rolf Solberg, ed., *South African Theatre in the Melting Pot: Trends and Developments at the Turn of the Millennium* (Interviews by Rolf Solberg) (Grahamstown: ISEA, 2003).
- 34 This data derived from the Nexus database of registered research of the National Research Foundation (NRF) in April 2010.
- 35 Loren Kruger, *The Drama of South Africa: Plays, Pageants and Publics since 1910* (London: Routledge, 1999); and Duncan Brown, ed., *Oral Literature and Performance in Southern Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999).
- 36 Bernth Lindfors, *Africans on Stage* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999); Rolf Solberg, ed., *Alternative Theatre in South Africa: Talks with Prime Movers since the 1970's* (Pietermaritzburg: Hadedu Books, University of Natal Press, 1999), Lizbeth Goodman, ed., *Women, Politics and Performance in South African Theatre Today 1*, *Contemporary Theatre Review: An International Journal*, 9, 1 (1999); D. Graver, ed., *Plays for a New South Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Kathy A. Perkins, ed., *Black South African Women: An Anthology of Plays* (Cape Town: Cape Town University Press, Routledge, 1999); and Temple Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Reflections in a Fractured Mirror* (Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik, 1997).
- 37 See 'Crossover Theatre: Performance in a Multi-cultural Society', in Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society*, pp. 66–84.
- 38 The field is also referred to as – *inter alia* – 'research-into-practice', 'practice-based research', or 'performance-as-research', where variants may be linked to a particular perspective or methodological approach.
- 39 Besides a number of working groups and centres devoted to it today, see three recent publications: Ludvine Allegue, Simon Jones, Baz Kershaw and Angela Piccini, eds., *Practice-as-Research in*

Performance and Screen (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Shannon Rose Riley and Lynette Hunter, eds., *Mapping Landscapes for Performance as Research Scholarly Acts and Creative Cartographies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, eds., *Practice as Research: Context, Method, Knowledge* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010).

- 40 Notable recent examples include Mark Fleishman and Jenny Reznik's Magnet Theatre, Gary Gordon's The First Physical Theatre Company, Brett Bailey's Third World Bunfight, Basil Jones and Adrian Kohler's The Handspring Puppet Company, and Eric Abraham and Mark Dornford-May's Isango Portobello company.
- 41 Mark Fleishman, Veronica Baxter, Temple Hauptfleisch and Alex Sutherland, 'Testing Criteria for Recognising Practice as Research in the Performing Arts in South Africa, with Particular Reference to the Case of Drama and Theatre', a report on a national research project commissioned by the NRF, 2009.

TEMPLE HAUPTFLEISCH (satj@sun.ac.za) is a researcher and lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. He served as Head of the Centre for SA Theatre Research (CESAT – 1979–87), Chair of the University of Stellenbosch Drama Department (1995–2005) and Director of the Centre for Theatre and Performance Studies, Stellenbosch (1994–2009). Hauptfleisch is the founder–editor and publisher of the South African Theatre Journal (1987–) and the author of more than eighty works on the history of South African theatre, research methodology and the sociology of theatre.